

Message Text

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17

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05

L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 AID-05 CIEP-02 SS-15

STR-04 TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01

FEA-01 /127 W

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R 020721Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5878

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE BY POUCH

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY BY POUCH

UNCLAS CANBERRA 3541

SYDNEY ALSO PASS TRADE CENTER

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ETRD, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN AIDE-MEMOIRE ON IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

REF: A. CANBERRA 3540

B. CANBERRA 3267 NOTAL

C. CANBERRA 3022 NOTAL

D. CANBERRA 2729 NOTAL

D. CANBERRA 1592

1. REF (A) REPORTS RECEIPT FROM AUSTRALIAN
GOVERNMENT OF AIDE-MEMOIRE ON AUSTRALIAN IMPORT
RESTRICTIONS, RESPONDING TO AIDE-MEMOIRE ON THIS
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SUBJECT WHICH EMBASSY PRESENTED TO SPECIAL

MINISTER OF STATE ON 13 MARCH 1975.

2. TEXT OF AUSTRALIAN JUNE 2 AIDE-MEMOIRE FOLLOWS:

QTE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REFERS TO THE AIDE-MEMOIRE PRESENTED BY THE UNITED STATES CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN CANBERRA ON 13 MARCH 1975, CONCERNING AUSTRALIAN IMPORT POLICY. QTE THE RECENT EMERGENCY MEASURES TAKEN TO RESTRAIN CERTAIN IMPORTS INTO AUSTRALIA COVER A RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF ITEMS IN PARTICULAR INDUSTRIAL SECTORS. THEY ARE SHORT-TERM SAFEGUARD ACTIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN DECIDED UPON AFTER SEPARATE INDEPENDENT PUBLIC ENQUIRIES. THEY ARE CONCERNED WITH AND ARE DESIGNED TO HELP ALLEVIATE SERIOUS DISRUPTION TO DOMESTIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT CAUSED BY VERY RAPID INCREASES IN CERTAIN IMPORTS. IN SEVERAL CASES THE IMPORTS IN QUESTION HAD MORE THAN DOUBLED THEIR MARKET SHARE WITHIN A FEW MONTHS, SERIOUSLY DISTORTING THE TRADITIONAL EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN IMPORTS AND LOCAL PRODUCTION IN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTORS CONCERNED.

QTE IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT EVEN WITH TEMPORARY RESTRAINTS OPERATING, IMPORTS OF THE GOODS CONCERNED ARE GENERALLY BEING PERMITTED TO CONTINUE AT VERY HIGH LEVELS. IN NOW CASE HAVE IMPORT PROHIBITIONS BEEN INTRODUCED. THE OBJECTIVE IS FOR RESTRAINTS TO BE IMPOSED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PERMIT TRADE TO CONTINUE IN A STABLE MANNER, SO THAT TRADITIONAL SUPPLIERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF RETAINING REASONABLE SHARES OF THE AUSTRALIAN MARKET PENDING THE TIME WHEN IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO REMOVE THE RESTRICTIONS. QTE THE ACTION TAKEN SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS A MOVE TO TRANSFER DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS TO OTHER COUNTRIES NOR AS RELIANCE ON IMPORT RESTRICTIONS AS A PRINCIPAL MEANS OF DEALING WITH DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IT IS STRESSED THAT, ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE DESIGNED TO HELP FIRMS AND INDIVIDUALS ADAPT TO A MORE COMPETITIVE INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT AND TO ENCOURAGE A REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN THE LONGER TERM. QTE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO PROMOTING THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERALISATION OF WORLD TRADE AND TO PURSUING AN OUTGOING TRADE POLICY. DESPITE DOMESTIC UNCLASSIFIED

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ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, THE 25 PCT. ACROSS-THE-BOARD CUT IN TARIFFS INTRODUCED IN 1973 HAS BEEN GENERALLY MAINTAINED, TARIFF REVIEWS HAVE LED TO FURTHER TARIFF REDUCTIONS COVERING A SUBSTANTIAL VOLUME OF TRADE, AND THROUGH CHANGES IN THE PARITY OF THE AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR AUSTRALIA'S TRADING PARTNERS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH AN ENHANCED COMPETITIVE POSITION IN THE AUSTRALIAN MARKET. QTE ACCORDING TO O.E.C.D. CALCULATIONS, TOTAL IMPORTS INTO

AUSTRALIA INCREASED BY 28 PER CENT IN VOLUME IN 1974, IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE TOTAL O.E.C.D. IMPORT VOLUME INCREASE OF 2 PCT. IN 1974 AND THE UNITED STATES IMPORT VOLUME DECREASE OF 1 PCT. IN 1974. IN VALUE TERMS, AUSTRALIA'S TOTAL IMPORTS IN 1973/74 WERE 48 PCT. HIGHER THAN IN 1972/73, AND IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF THE PRESENT FINANCIAL YEAR THEY WERE STILL RUNNING AHEAD OF THOSE IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

QTE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ASSURES THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, AS IT HAS ALREADY ASSURED THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THROUGH ORGANISATIONS OF WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS A MEMBER, THAT IT REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE. IN DOING SO, HOWEVER, IT IS NOT PREPARED TO FOREGO ITS RIGHTS TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS TO WHICH IT IS A SIGNATORY.

QTE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FURTHER ASSURES THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT THAT THE RECENT MEASURES TAKEN TO RESTRAIN CERTAIN IMPORTS INTO AUSTRALIA HAVE BEEN CONSISTENT WITH AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND DO NOT PORTEND ANY CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA'S LIBERAL TRADE POLICY. END QTE.

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